Title of Session: Online Teaching and Learning
Moderator: BJ Berquist
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Room: Online Teaching and Learning Group

BjB : we'll get started as soon as Roger logs in....

BjB : while we wait, a reminder if you are new to Tapped In...

BjB : go to the Actions menu in the top right of the chat and select DETACH

MerveB: yes, I am new in the tappedin

JesseS: got it!

BjB : we can also start with introductions...

BjB : please share where you are located and what you teach or hope to teach

BjB : I teach remedial communication in Pennsylvania

MerveB: I am a student now in Turkey

MelissaPer: I am taking courses to be a English teacher - 9-12 grade in Texas

JesseS: My name is Jesse, I am from McAllen, TX and I am an IT Coordinator

BjB : interesting mix of disciplines!

JesseS: Melissa, What part of Texas r u from?

BjB : The topic for this group is Online Teaching and Learning...

MelissaPer: Kingsville - TAMUK

BjB : what is your primary focus? Are you more interested in the teaching or the learning?

MerveB: will we talk about the strategies of online teaching and learning?

BjB : yes, when Roger arrives, Merve

MerveB: I think both of them are very important for me

JesseS: I will say both

MelissaPer: Both

BjB : looks like 'both' is unanimous!

MelissaPer: you can't do one without the other

BjB : does anyone already take an online course? If so, what are the benefits of taking the class online?

MerveB: because I am a university student of English language teaching

JesseS: flexibility

MelissaPer: I like the time aspect but sometimes would like to see the instructor every once in a while

BjB : by 'time' aspect and flexibility are you referring to asynch classes?

MelissaPer: yes

BjB . o O (using message boards and email groups)

JesseS: yes

BjB : do any of your courses use real time text chat?

MelissaPer: not yet

JesseS: yes

BjB : time zones can be a major problem with online real time chats

BjB : what other drawbacks do you find?

BjB . o O (besides not meeting f2f with an instructor?)

MerveB: building your course web site is very useful

JesseS: haven't seen one yet.

BjB : are you all familiar with blended learning?

MelissaPer: me neither

JesseS: I feel very comfortable with online learning

BjB nods to Jesse and Melissa

BjB : I've been a member of Tapped In for almost 10 years...

MelissaPer: I like online learning so far.

BjB : in that time I've seen total technophobic teachers logging in for online classes and being very resistant

MelissaPer: I had never done this before and I like it more than regular classroom

BjB : and I've also seen people like you who take to online learning very easily

MelissaPer: is it because they are skeptical?

BjB : can you tell us more, Melissa?

MerveB: online learning offers a tremendous opportunity to learn without the limitations of time and location, doesn't it?

BjB : Melissa, some will come right out and say they are afraid of technology

BjB : yes, Merve...as long as the learning offers asynchronous features

MelissaPer: I work with teachers who are very much afraid of the computer and resist using it as much as possible

BjB : Jesse, do you work with teachers?

JesseS: yes, everyday

BjB : and do you find teachers accepting of tech ideas?

MerveB: I think a teacher should use the computer very well

JesseS: and just like Melissa just stated, there are teachers who do not like to use technology at all

BjB : I think we all agree on that, Merve!

MerveB frowns

MelissaPer: some will but other only use it because they have to

BjB : I guess what it comes down to is that there is no ONE way to do things...

BjB : just as you have to offer differentiated learning to students...

MelissaPer: unfortunately it is the students who miss out on the opportunities

BjB : you need to provide differentiated learning for online classes...

MelissaPer: not all learn the same

BjB : right, Melissa

MerveB: Has technology increased student learning opportunities?

JesseS: Of course

MelissaPer: I believe it has

BjB agrees

MerveB: they can learn whenever they want

BjB : but just because the opportunities are there doesn't mean that everyone will take advantage of that opportunity

MelissaPer: many students know how to do more on the computer

MelissaPer: yes that is true

MerveB: many students don't have a computer, yet..

BjB : you are all young people...probably digital natives?

MelissaPer: sort of

MerveB: maybe

BjB : that's something important you bring up, Merve...

BjB : access to technology is not ubiquitous

MelissaPer: very true

JesseS: true

MerveB: yes of course

BjB : this might also be an obstacle to online learning and teaching

MelissaPer: yes

BjB : anyone heard about the 100 dollar computers?

MelissaPer: no

MerveB: no

JesseS: no

BjB : they are being developed for third world communities

MelissaPer: are they going to have everything like the one here

BjB : to provide inexpensive access to technology...

BjB : I believe they are a more spare version...but...

JesseS: I have heard about people being able to get a computer at a very low price in some countries.

MerveB: I believe we are very lucky because technology gives us a chance to communicate and interact with people all over the world

MelissaPer: it will make things easier for people to gain the education they would need to compete with other

BjB : during a recent discussion with Randy Caton...

BjB : he mentioned that a version of Squeak will be included in the new computers

MelissaPer: what is squeak?

BjB : Squeak allows kids to learn how to program and problem solve...let me get you a url

MerveB: in Turkey my country there is a rise having a computer recently, not because it is expensive but, it is very needed

MelissaPer: very interesting

MerveB: why it is interesting Melissa?

BjB : http://www.squeakland.org

MelissaPer: never heard of it

BjB . o O (hold down the ctrl key on your computer when you click on the url)

BjB : it's a free download...

BjB : there have been a couple discussions in Tapped In about it that are archived at www.tappedin.org/transcripts

BjB : There is also a student resource room in the student campus you might want to look at that has more information about squeak and another program Randy developed

MelissaPer: There is so much information out there

BjB : Squeak is a free, open-source, object-oriented, multimedia, play-oriented authoring environment that runs on many platforms and can be used to construct active learning environments for all ages.

MelissaPer: I never really looked at things outside of what I need

BjB : and there is the reason that I bring the topic up...construct active learning

JesseS: looks interesting.

BjB : do you think that this is something that should be included in online courses?

MerveB: yes, I think, because it has many features.

MelissaPer: I would like to look at it more - but just from the opening page it looks like it could be very useful in the classroom and online

MerveB: what are the advantages of an online course?

JesseS: It would depend on the grade level

MerveB: the big advantage of Online courses offer flexibility.

BjB : I think the point I also am trying to make is that an online course can no longer be a sage on the stage affair

BjB : the learning has to be interactive and collaborative.

BjB : Merve, after you participate in the Tapped In discussions...

BjB : do you talk with others in your class...

BjB : and share reflections on what took place?

MerveB: ok, I will talk and share

MelissaPer: I was sharing with a coworker about Tapped In and what I had learned

MelissaPer: The only way people will know about this is by sharing with others

BjB : do you feel that the collaboration and reflection is an important part of learning?

MerveB: Tapped in very attractive for everyone who want to learn something is useful

JesseS: yes

MerveB: yes,

MelissaPer: I know of teachers who want other ideas but don't know where to go

MelissaPer: yes

DavidW joined the room.

MerveB: hi, David

MelissaPer: hello

DavidW waves

DavidW: hi, folks

JesseS: hi

MerveB: collaboration is a way to learn something effectively

MelissaPer: agree

BjB : hi, David. We're discussing online learning and the importance of collaboration and reflection

DavidW: Thanks, Bj

BjB : what about reflective writing?

BjB : blogs? wikis?

JesseS: They are all useful

MerveB: there are some shy students, and if they have a group work in classroom they have a chance to have a say

JesseS: But all people learn in different ways.

MelissaPer: true

BjB nods solemnly...right, Jesse

MerveB: yes, All people have a different strategies.

MerveB: everybody has individual characteristics

BjB : David, we can tell Roger that we've solved all the problems encountered in online learning!

DavidW smiles

DavidW: He'll be SO excited to hear that

MelissaPer: smiles

BjB chuckles.

JesseS: smiles

BjB : well, we did discuss differentiated learning

BjB : and real time and asynch

BjB : and collaboration

BjB : and reflective writing

MerveB: reflective writing is to develop the minds, knowledge of the learner

BjB : and possibly f2f discussions

BjB nods to Merve

BjB : Melissa, Jesse and Merve, did I leave out anything?

MelissaPer: no

JesseS: no

BjB : oh...I know one thing...

MerveB: no

BjB : it should be fun and engaging

MelissaPer: agree

MerveB: motivation is also important:)

MerveB: effective praising:)

MelissaPer: we can't do the same things over and over

MelissaPer: because the students will become bored

BjB . o O (or in the same way?)

BjB : what about doing the same thing but in a variety of ways?

MelissaPer: yes

BjB : or is that differentiating?

MerveB: yes, we shouldn't use the same way

JesseS: yes

MelissaPer: I see teachers using the same kinds of programs and not using anything else

MerveB: alas, many of teachers like that

BjB nods...not a good idea, huh?

JesseS: I think that people have to be able to adapt to online learning.

MelissaPer: but it could be they don't know of other resources or

BjB : ahhh...good one, Jesse

MerveB: nods..

BjB : related to active learning?

MelissaPer: at my school everything is blocked

BjB : firewalls are a problem

MelissaPer: nods

MerveB: what about your online courses offer more individual attention?

JesseS: That is for security reasons.

JesseS: very valid reasons.

BjB : good comment, Merve

MelissaPer: I understand but many time frustrating

MerveB: When you complete this course, you will be able to include e-mail and web browsing as technical skills on your resume

MerveB: Online courses give you real world skills

JesseS: Students also get distracted with some websites

BjB : and will your resume be online? Will it be an e-portfolio?

JesseS: That is one of the reasons why websites are blocked

BjB nods to Jesse.

MelissaPer: know that but when good websites are blocked

BjB : we can have a whole hour discussion on blocking and firewalls!

MelissaPer: it is hard to teachers to get some better information for projects

BjB : and social networking...

JesseS: I totally agree.

MerveB: yes, I agree

MelissaPer: or they used it before - now it is blocked

BjB : my major problem with firewalls is that schools are trying to 'protect' the students...

MerveB: yes,

JesseS: yes

BjB : instead of teaching them to be effective and intelligent users of technology

MelissaPer: it can be frustrating for a teacher who wants to use online materials

MelissaPer: and students

BjB : where else are the students going to learn appropriate online behavior?

JesseS: but you can not allow them to have access to everything.

MelissaPer: I agree

BjB : not saying that, Jesse

BjB . o O (I work in a juvenile correctional facility...believe me, I know what you're talking about!)

MelissaPer: There needs to be some limits but some firewalls go to far

MerveB: Online courses teach you to be self-disciplined

MelissaPer: very true

JesseS: agree

BjB : yes, Merve! that is sooo important!

BjB : most online courses are at the college or graduate level...

MerveB: self-realization propels your success in an online course. No one is there looking over your shoulder to tell you to go online and study. No one is there to make you ask questions or post responses. The motivation to study in an online course comes from you. It's something we call student-centered or active learning.

JesseS: totally agree

MelissaPer: yes

MerveB: your success depends on you!

MelissaPer: nods

JesseS: that is why online learning is not for everybody.

BjB smiles. Thanks so much for bringing up that point, Merve. Very important

MerveB smiles

BjB : correct, Jesse

BjB : and on that note...

BjB : shall we end this discussion? I hope you all feel it was productive...

MerveB: The motivation to study in an online course comes from you.

BjB . o O (even if Roger didn't join us)

DavidW: since he thought we solved all the problems

DavidW grins at Bj

MerveB smiles

MelissaPer: This has been very informative

BjB nods to David ;-)

MelissaPer: loved it

JesseS: yes it has

MerveB: yes, it has

BjB : I'll head over to the faculty resistance to online learning, but someone else is going to have to lead that discussion if Roger isn't there!

JesseS: see ya there

BjB : thank you very much for your input, Melissa, Jesse, and Merve

JesseS: Thank YOU.

MelissaPer: thanks

MerveB: thanks..

BjB waves bye